

The Development of the Computer-based English FLPT

Abstract

This paper presents preliminary findings of a research project launched by the LTTC (Language Training & Testing Center) in 2008, which aimed to computerize the English FLPT (Foreign Language Proficiency Test) and create a computer-based FLPT (CB-FLPT), serving as an alternative to the current paper-based FLPT (PB-FLPT). Two main stages were involved in the development of the CB-FLPT. The first stage was to adapt current PB-FLPT forms for use in the CB-FLPT and to investigate the comparability of the adapted and the original forms. The second stage focused on the investigation of whether changes in the test mode led to discrepancies in test performance. For this purpose, the CB- and PB-FLPT were administered to two groups of volunteer participants in a counterbalanced manner and a questionnaire was given afterwards. The test takers' scores and responses to the questionnaire were analyzed and compared. The analysis of test scores indicated a significant mode effect in the Listening test, while in the Usage and the Vocabulary and Reading tests, the effect was negligible. Findings from the questionnaire showed that most of the participants held positive attitudes towards the CB format. Further analyses and results of this study will be reported in November 2009, and the findings will be used in the modification and implementation of the CB-FLPT.

Key Words: FLPT, computer-based testing, test performance, mode effect, score comparability